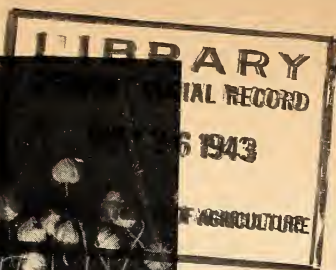


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6 STEPS in grading Flaxseed

Flaxseed is sold by grade. The three grades are No. 1, No. 2, and Sample. This folder shows how the grading is done and tells some things farmers can do to have better flaxseed to sell.

EXTENSION SERVICE

United States Department of Agriculture

AWI-37

May 1943

SAMPLE

1. Take a fair sample of the flaxseed (1).*
(Grain graders use a long metal probe or trier to draw the sample.)

ODOR

2. Smell the sample (2). If the grain has a musty, sour, or other bad odor, or if it is heating, it is graded as Sample. Farmers who have tried to store damp flaxseed find later that the seed has a bad odor and also that it may be heating or hot from spoilage.

DOCKAGE

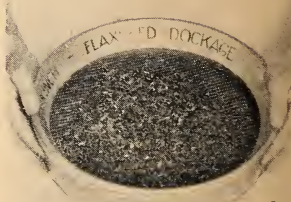
3. Dirt and other seeds in the grain are among the first things that lower the price of flaxseed. In grading flaxseed, the sample is cleaned with special screens or sieves; the foreign matter that cannot be taken out with sieves is picked out by hand from a small part of the sample. This material taken out of the sample is known as dockage. Dockage is indi-



1



2



3

* Numbers in parentheses refer to illustrations.

cated as so many parts in a hundred. For example, if 100 pounds of flaxseed "sold in the dirt," has 10 percent dockage, the farmer would be paid for 90 pounds of flaxseed. He might get something for the dockage if it had in it valuable seed, such as wheat or oats.

A DOCKAGE TEST

To test for dockage, at least two screens or sieves are needed, one a wire-mesh sieve, with 4 by 16 meshes to the square inch and another with small round holes four and one-half sixty-fourths ($4\frac{1}{2}/64$) of an inch across. The wire-mesh sieve takes off coarse matter, and the second sieve cleans out fine dirt and small weed seeds (3). If broken flaxseed is removed, the dockage is run over the sieve a second time to recover or save from going into the dockage as much broken flaxseed as possible. If the dockage cannot be removed by the sieves alone, the job is finished by hand by picking the rest of the dockage from a small part of the cleaned flaxseed (4).

Grain dealers who buy flaxseed usually have the sieves for making the dockage test and will show you how it is done.

The farmer's job is to keep weeds out of the flaxseed in the first place, which is not easy. It will take all the judgment and skill of a good farmer to handle his land and crops. This will be worth while, too, for at this time, when trucks and freight cars are scarce, we should not expect them to haul worthless weed seeds along with our grain.

MOISTURE

4. Flaxseed that has more than 11 parts (or percent) of water to 100 parts of seed is not safe for storage. Flaxseed with over 11

percent water will be graded as Sample instead of as No. 1 or No. 2. Flaxseed containing 8 or 9 percent water suits the oil mills best. Wet flaxseed is hard to grind and press. Less oil and meal are made from it than from dry flaxseed.

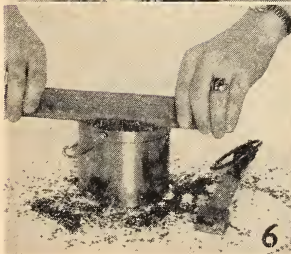
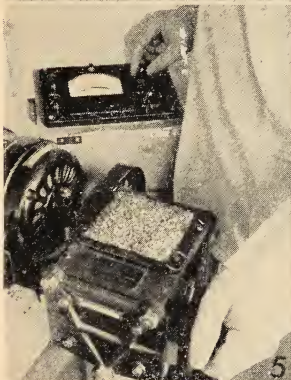
Grain inspectors use a moisture machine for telling the percentage of water in flaxseed (5).

Farmers know that flax is hard to thresh when damp. The best time to thresh or combine is when the flax bolls or pods open at the top and crack slightly between the five little segments or parts of the seed boll. The flaxseed bolls in the picture on the front cover of this folder show these cracks. When

damp, the seed boll is tightly closed.

TEST WEIGHT

5. In grading flaxseed a test of what a



measured bushel would weigh is made. To grade No. 1, the seed must test at least 49 pounds, and to grade No. 2, it must test 47 pounds. This keeps badly shriveled and immature flaxseed out of the higher grades. Inspectors make this test with a brass quart measure and beam and use the flaxseed after it has been cleaned with dockage sieves (6).

DAMAGED FLAXSEED

6. When there are fire-damaged kernels in a sample of flaxseed, it is graded as Sample. Fire-damaged seed is charred and dead black. Such seed has been burned by fire. Storing flaxseed when damp may have caused the fire. Flaxseed can also be injured by sprouting and by being frosted or badly weather-damaged. As long as there are no fire-damaged kernels, the No. 1 grade may have 20 and the No. 2 grade 30 percent of damaged kernels.

We need the linseed oil and meal that come from high-grade flaxseed.

HIGH-GRADE FLAXSEED—

is clean, dry, and plump and has a good, natural odor. It is free of damaged and fire-burned seeds.

*You can CONTROL
the QUALITY
of the FLAXSEED
you raise if you—*

- 1. Clean the land of weeds.*
- 2. Make a well-packed seedbed.*
- 3. Plant clean seed of the variety recommended by your own State agricultural experiment station.*
- 4. Plant it early.*
- 5. Plant it shallow.*
- 6. Thresh it dry.*

For more information about flaxseed, call your county agricultural agent or write to your State agricultural college.

Licensed grain inspectors and Federal grain supervisors of the War Food Administration, United States Department of Agriculture, are the officials located in the larger grain markets who can give you further advice on the inspection and grading of flaxseed.